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THE TRAINING OF RURAL MISSIONARIES

prepared by

The Committee on Missionary Training

of the

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General Statement

Rural Missions as interpreted in terms of training for rural missionaries means the whole Christian task as it relates to rural people. It is more than a department of Christian work. The term "rural" qualifies all Christian activities among rural people and, therefore, becomes an important factor in the training requirements of evangelistic, educational, medical, and agricultural missionaries whose activities are predominantly with rural groups. *

In addition to the general personal qualifications for all missionaries, there is demanded in the rural missionary certain other characteristics that would not be so necessary in a missionary working with non-rural populations. There must be therefore, in addition to the generally accepted qualifications, rural-mindedness and understanding of rural modes of thought and living, a love for the country and country people, a belief in the dignity and worth of country and village life, ideals for Christian rural culture and civilization, an understanding and respectful appreciation of the native culture and civilization of the people to whom the missionary goes, and nothing less than a passion to enter into the life and needs of country people on the basis of friendly helpfulness and cooperation, with a background of adequate preparation for the particular task at hand.

It should be kept clearly in mind by rural missionaries that their whole task consists not only of redeeming the individual but also society, and that their particular task is accomplishing these things with respect to rural peoples and rural society, rural culture, rural civilization. The goal is a rural civilization that shall be Christian to the core. The individual is involved not only as such but as a member of the farm family, of the rural community, of the nation and of the family of nations. The individual villager is not only to be Christian with respect to his own life, but in all his relationships - social, economic, religious, intellectual, political. It is necessary, therefore, that the rural Christian missionary be prepared to enter understandingly and sympathetically into all phases of rural life. Though his specific rural activities may be limited or in a sense specialized, they should be based on adequate rural training.

* The Committee intends this statement to be understood as including women missionaries in all of these categories.

There are many evidences that the rural people of the world are being given greater recognition than ever before by governments, philanthropic and religious agencies, and the more favored elements in various national, social and economic groups. Liberation from their previous status is taking place. If Christianity is to have a commensurate influence in these rural movements, it behooves its representatives to be so trained as to be able to guide them into Christian ideals with reference to all of life and life's activities. These changes in the rural population without doubt present one of the greatest present-day challenges to Christendom. We need to Christianize the springs of national life at its source - that is, the villages for the most of the world. The importance of a new emphasis on rural training ought not to need further argument.

For all groups of rural workers certain concepts with respect to training need to be clearly recognized. First, the standards for rural work must be equal to the best standards that are required for any other missionary activity. Secondly, that specialization must be for a broad field rather than for a narrow field of interest. Thirdly, that a Christian civilization must be thought of in terms not of religion only, but also in terms of health, wealth, knowledge, social welfare, and high ethical and moral standards. Fourthly, the rural missionary in this pioneer field must be an "answer-finder" rather than an "answer-learner" of the problems of creating a Christian rural civilization.

THE RURAL EVANGELISTIC MISSIONARY

Giving due consideration to the conditions under which the rural evangelistic missionary works, the following recommendations are made with reference to his or her training.

I. The country evangelistic worker should have some first-hand experience of rural life and people, preferably of farm life and activities, as part of his or her preliminary training. This is especially essential for town and city bred people.

II. 1. Four years' course in a College of Liberal Arts; and
One or two years in an Agricultural College, without specialization but with emphasis on general courses in basic sciences - natural and social, including education and orientation courses in general agriculture. Appendix "A" suggests a range of courses which should be covered as far as possible. Or

2. Four years' course in a College of Agriculture, without specialization but with emphasis on rural sociology, economics, education, the basic sciences, and up to 25% of his work in liberal arts courses. If necessary, an extra year should be taken, especially if the courses in agriculture have been in technical agricultural subjects. The list of courses in Appendix "A" should have been completely covered.

III. Full Theological Seminary Training.
Appendix "B" includes courses which should be of special value to the missionary in training. In addition, work should be taken in cultural

anthropology, comparative religion, Christian sociology, philosophy of religion, psychology, and everything the student can get in the way of courses relating to the Rural Church.

IV. Field Experience. It is strongly recommended that a candidate for rural evangelistic work have, if possible, a year's work under a successful rural minister, or in connection with a larger Parish, before going to the field. The cooperation of home mission boards should be sought in locating such opportunities for service and experience.

V. Special Training for Women Rural Evangelistic Workers. In view of the fact that the rural women among whom the women missionaries will work are concerned primarily with the home, motherhood, child care, health, food, clothing, and the care of gardens, chickens, pigs, as the case may be, and many partake of the actual farm field work, it is recommended that women missionaries previous to their seminary or missionary training school work should secure training dealing with the home, foods, diet, nutrition, child care, hygiene and sanitation, health education, etc. A working knowledge of gardening should be especially helpful.

To the criticism that these requirements are too high and require too long a time, it should be pointed out that our American institutions are not geared properly to the effective training of either rural ministers or rural evangelistic missionaries; and that by an exchange of credits, especially as between the agricultural colleges and seminaries, or the use of summer schools, the length of time prescribed above might be considerably reduced. The requirements no doubt are higher than any heretofore suggested, but the greatness of the Rural Church problem clearly demands the best possible preparation.

THE RURAL EDUCATIONAL MISSIONARY

It is assumed that the rural educational missionary would be concerned chiefly with institutions of secondary school grade, vernacular normal schools and/or the training of rural primary school teachers, and of conducting schools designed to meet the educational and life needs of boys who are going back to the villages. Emphasis in such schools should be placed on a socialized curriculum, built on community needs and contributing definitely to the upbuilding of a Christian rural community.

The background experience and college training recommended for the rural evangelistic missionary, as indicated in I and II are also recommended for the rural missionary educator. In addition, the training should include:

III. At least one year of professional training at an institution where both basic courses in education, psychology, etc., and courses in rural education can be secured. Special attention should be given to a study of the rural educational resources, especially in some of the southern Negro schools and, if possible, a visit be made to some of the best of them to study them in relation to the communities which they are serving.

IV. It is further recommended that one year be devoted to the courses outlined for non-theological missionaries. See page 7, Appendix B.

V. At least one year's teaching experience in a rural high school or private school, the program of which actively relates to community interests and needs, is essential for the rural educational missionary. Before planning definitely on such experience, the candidate should consult the candidate secretary or some one in close touch with schools of the type that would have most to contribute to the missionary's training.

VI. For women missionaries undertaking rural educational work, attention is called to recommendation V, page 3, which applies equally to the woman missionary educator.

THE AGRICULTURAL MISSIONARY

The conditions which the agricultural missionary will find at his assigned place of work will be very different from the agricultural practices and life of America. So very little of American field and animal husbandry can be applied to conditions in Asia and Africa, that no agricultural missionary should depend on his skill in these things. Emphasis in training should be placed on the basic natural and social sciences. It is desirable that the agricultural missionary should have as wide a variety as possible of manual skills in shop and field practice. For the most part he will have to be an "answer finder" before he will be able to tell native farmers what to do. The agricultural missionary should look forward to specialized study on his first furlough, based on his experience and needs. If the agricultural missionary, however, knows to what field he is to go, in light of this knowledge he should take at least one year of graduate work as part of his pre-service training. More specifically his training should include:

I. Whether farm or city bred, the agricultural missionary should have had a good all-round farm experience. And

II. 1. Four years' college course in Agriculture, with a good grounding in the natural and social sciences, and general courses in animal and field husbandry, including entomology, pathology, plant breeding, and considerable work in education. At least 25% of his courses should be in liberal arts subjects. He should have had all the courses mentioned in Appendix "A", for the agricultural missionary must be quite as much interested in a way of living as in a way of getting a living. Five years of work can be well spent on this outline of courses, incidentally securing a Master's degree. Or

2. If the candidate is a graduate of a four year college of liberal arts, he should have three years in a college of agriculture following the recommendations outlined in the preceding paragraph.

III. One year of courses recommended for the non-theological missionary. See page 7, Appendix B.

IV. After arrival on field, and before beginning an active program, six months to a year should be spent at a national agricultural college, orienting his training to the local conditions of Agriculture and getting in touch with all national agencies relating to Agriculture and rural life that may be of help in working out his own program.

THE AGRICULTURAL SPECIALIST

There is at present, and will continue to be for some time, a limited field for agricultural specialists such as entomologists, plant pathologists, geneticists, plant breeders, agronomists, rural sociologists, agricultural economists, animal husbandry specialists, agricultural chemists, botanists, biologists, etc. The demand will be confined to such colleges as Allahabad Agricultural Institute in India, College of Agriculture, Lingnan University, Canton, China, and the College of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Nanking, and institutions of similar grade.

APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED COURSES IN PREPARATION FOR RURAL MISSIONARY SERVICE

	Semester
I. Rural Sociology	
General Rural Sociology	1
Rural Social Organization	1
Town and Country Relationships	1
Methods and Practice in Rural Community Survey	1
Rural Recreation	1
Music and Dramatics for Rural School and Church	1
Village Life in Foreign Lands	1
Rural Health and Welfare	1
Rural Social Psychology	1
II. Rural Economics	
General Agricultural Economics	1
Farm Organization and Management	1
History of Agriculture and Agrarian Movements in the U. S.	1
Theory and Practice of Cooperative Enterprises	1
III. Household Economics	
Diet and Food Values	
Clothes and Sewing	
Child Care	
Family Budgets	
IV. Rural Education	
Educational Methods	1
Educational Psychology	1
Philosophy of Education	1
V. General Agriculture	
Soils and Crops	
Dairying and Animal Husbandry	
Poultry	
Horticulture and Vegetable Gardening	
VI. Cultural Studies	
Literature of Rural Life	2
Philosophy of Rural Life	1
Rural Literature of the Bible	1
Christian Ideals for Agriculture and Rural Life	1
Art of Rural Living	1
VII. General	
Extension Programs and Techniques	2
Club Work for Boys and Girls	1
Courses in Natural History	
Handicraft	

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTED SEMINARY COURSES IN PREPARATION
FOR
RURAL MISSIONARY SERVICE

English Bible (including rural interpretation)
" modern "

History of Christianity
Homiletics and Public Speaking
Course in Worship
Pastoral Techinques (Town and Country Church Methods
(Sociological Case Studies
and Sociological Surveys
"Practicum" (Summer work and during the course)
Comparative Religion
Philosophy of Religion
Psychology of Religion
Denominational Background Study
Interdenominational and Cooperative Church Movements
Religious Education
History of Missions and Science of Missions
Theology
Christian Festivals (Pageantry)
Christian Ethics
History of Philosophy
The Family and Family Relations
Modern Social and International Problems
Social Hygiene
Orientation Course for Missionaries